"AN INTERESTING, ABSORBING STORY . . . ACTION, INTRIGUE, AND INTROSPECTION ARE THREE GOOD REASONS TO TRY M.D. GEIST." — STEVE GINSBERG, CLAUDE'S COMICS

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02 OF 3 MONTHLY

ALL-NEW ORIGINAL PREQUEL TO THE ANIMATED FILM

M.D. GEIST GROUND ZERO

BONUS! ARMORED TROOPER VOTOMS PREVIEW INSIDE

M.D. GEIST

GROUND ZERO

PART TWO OF THREE PARTS

Planet Jerra is on the verge of war. Decades ago, colonists from Earth, led by President Nexrum, declared the planet their own and lit the fire of a rebellion against the cities established by the Earth Government. Rushing to prevent escalation, Colonel KURTZ and Lieutenant WONG created the MOST DANGEROUS SOLDIER (MDS) program: genetic research meant to build the ultimate soldier—a soldier capable of taking down Nexrum's army quickly and efficiently.

Intent on expanding the MDS program, Lieutenant Wong and one of her earliest prototypes, GEIST, travel to the secret base of Jerra Special Forces in order to put Geist into action. The JSF commanding officer, Colonel STANTON, wants nothing to do with them...but when Geist brutally maims Stanton's best field sergeant in a sparring match, the Colonel has little choice but to accept him.

Now, Stanton and one of his elite platoons are preparing to embark on a crucial mission deep inside Nexrum territory...but have very little idea what awaits them there!

based on characters and situations created by
KOICHI OHATA

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KOICHI OHATA
TIM ELDRED & JOHN OTT

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SPECIAL THANKS TO YOUNG HWAL SON.

CHARACTERS

GEIST

STANTON

WONG

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Studio Go! multimedia

CPM COMICS U.S. MANGA

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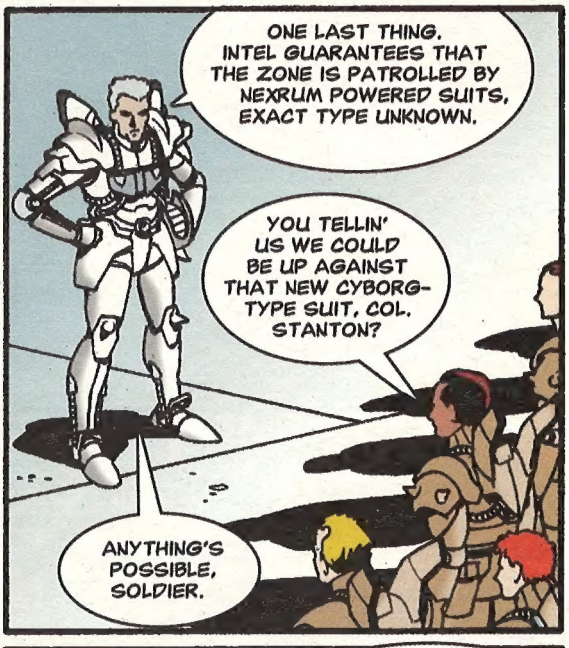
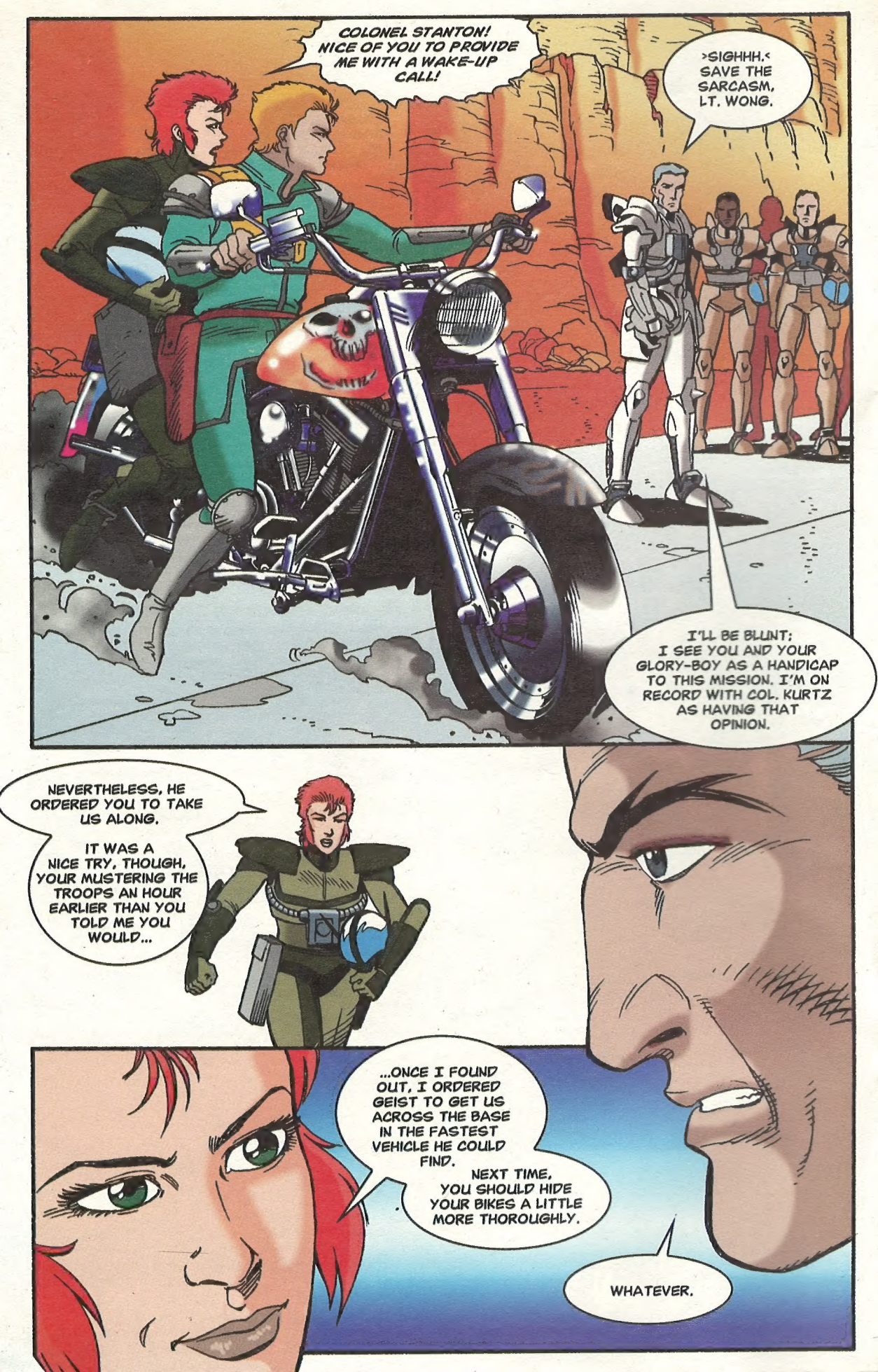
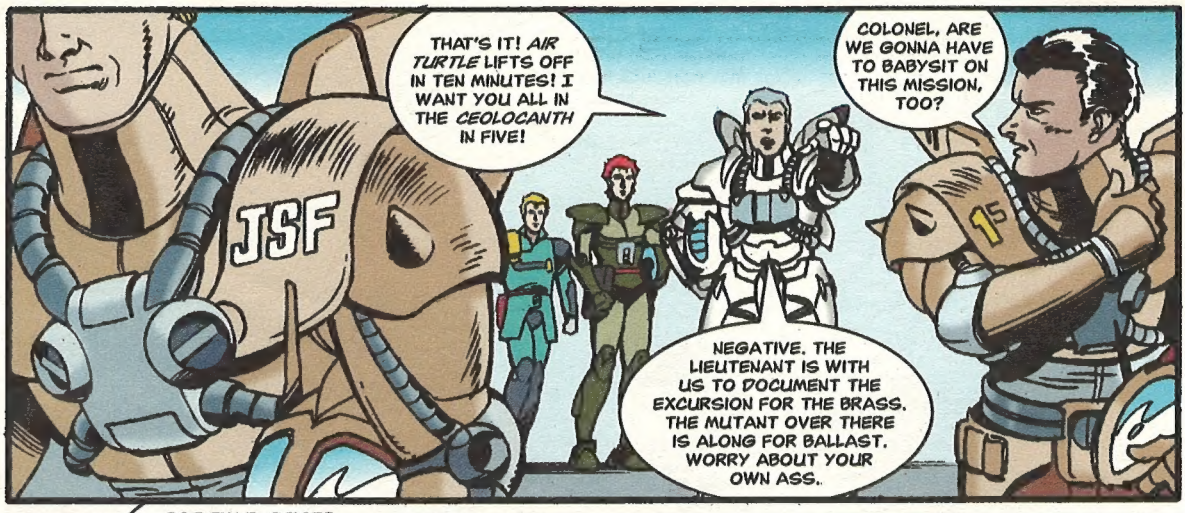
THIS ONE IS GOING TO GO CLEAN AND BY THE NUMBERS! I DON'T WANT THE LOSS OF SGT. ROBARD TO AFFECT YOUR PERFORMANCE--YOU'LL TAKE YOUR ORDERS FROM ME AND FALL BACK ON YOUR OWN COMMON SENSE WHEN YOU HAVE TO.

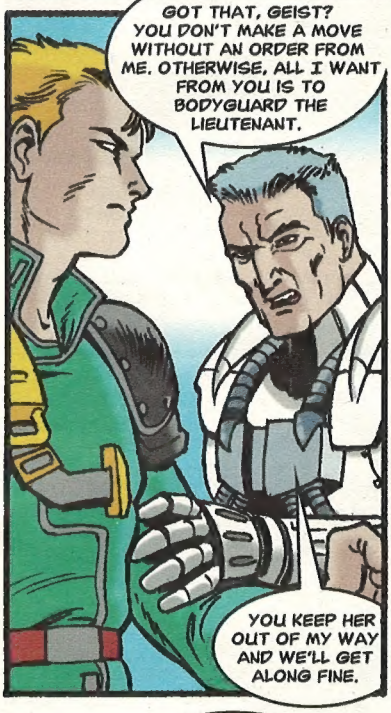
USE THE TIME IN TRANSIT TO GIVE EACH OTHERS' FIGHTEX ARMOR A FINAL SEAL CHECK. WE ARE HEADED FOR DEEP JUNGLE, GENTLEMEN, AND THE LAST THING I NEED IS FOR ONE OF YOU TO BE TAKEN OUT BY A DRILL-WORM OR SKINGRAFT BEETLE.


ONE LAST THING. INTEL GUARANTEES THAT THE ZONE IS PATROLLED BY NEXRUM POWERED SUITS, EXACT TYPE UNKNOWN.
YOU TELLIN' US WE COULD BE UP AGAINST THAT NEW CYBORG-TYPE SUIT, COL. STANTON?
ANYTHING'S POSSIBLE, SOLDIER.

SOME MIGHT CALL THAT A COP-OUT ANSWER. I CALL IT A WINNING ATTITUDE. YOU CAN--
EHN?
BRUMMBRMM


COLONEL STANTON! NICE OF YOU TO PROVIDE ME WITH A WAKE-UP CALL!
>SIGHHH.< SAVE THE SARCASM, LT. WONG.
I'LL BE BLUNT: I SEE YOU AND YOUR GLORY-BOY AS A HANDICAP TO THIS MISSION. I'M ON RECORD WITH COL. KURTZ AS HAVING THAT OPINION.
NEVERTHELESS, HE ORDERED YOU TO TAKE US ALONG.
IT WAS A NICE TRY, THOUGH, YOUR MUSTERING THE TROOPS AN HOUR EARLIER THAN YOU TOLD ME YOU WOULD...
...ONCE I FOUND OUT, I ORDERED GEIST TO GET US ACROSS THE BASE IN THE FASTEST VEHICLE HE COULD FIND.
NEXT TIME, YOU SHOULD HIDE YOUR BIKES A LITTLE MORE THOROUGHLY.
WHATEVER.


JSF
THAT'S IT! AIR TURTLE LIFTS OFF IN TEN MINUTES! I WANT YOU ALL IN THE CEOLOCANTH IN FIVE!
COLONEL, ARE WE GONNA HAVE TO BABYSIT ON THIS MISSION, TOO?
NEGATIVE. THE LIEUTENANT IS WITH US TO DOCUMENT THE EXCURSION FOR THE BRASS. THE MUTANT OVER THERE IS ALONG FOR BALLAST. WORRY ABOUT YOUR OWN ASS.

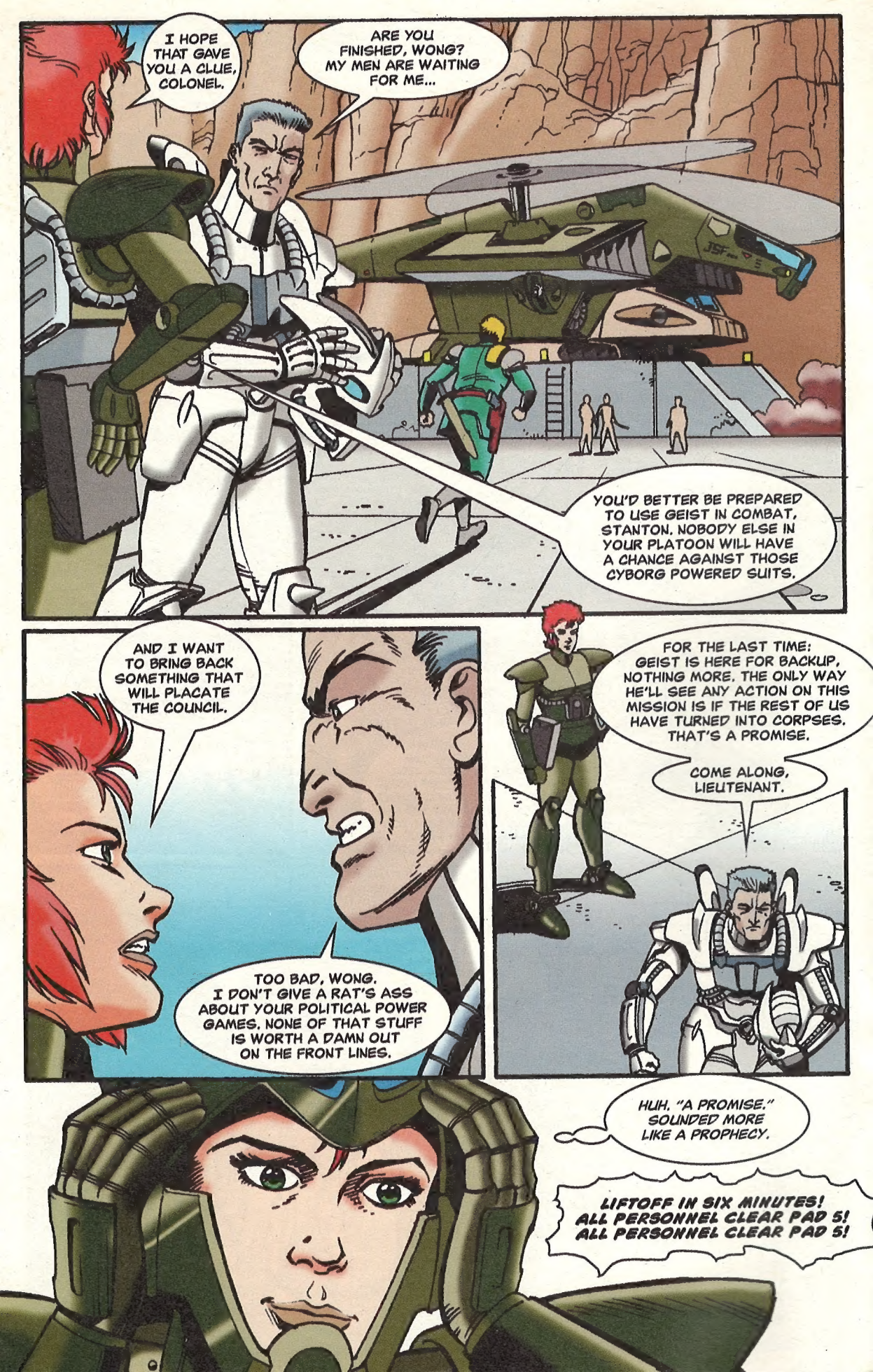

GOT THAT, GEIST? YOU DON'T MAKE A MOVE WITHOUT AN ORDER FROM ME. OTHERWISE, ALL I WANT FROM YOU IS TO BODYGUARD THE LIEUTENANT.
YOU KEEP HER OUT OF MY WAY AND WE'LL GET ALONG FINE.

NOW WAIT ONE MINUTE, COLONEL! I INSIST THAT GEIST BE OUTFITTED WITH FIGHTEX ARMOR, OR AT LEAST BE ASSIGNED A FIELD PARTNER! I DIDN'T SPEND TWO YEARS DEVELOPING HIM JUST TO SEE HIM--
THEN YOU SHOULD HAVE DRESSED HIM BEFORE YOU GOT HERE. WE LIFT OFF IN JUST UNDER EIGHT MINUTES, LIEUTENANT. IF YOU ARE AFRAID FOR HIS SAFETY, I SUGGEST YOU BOTH REMAIN BEHIND.

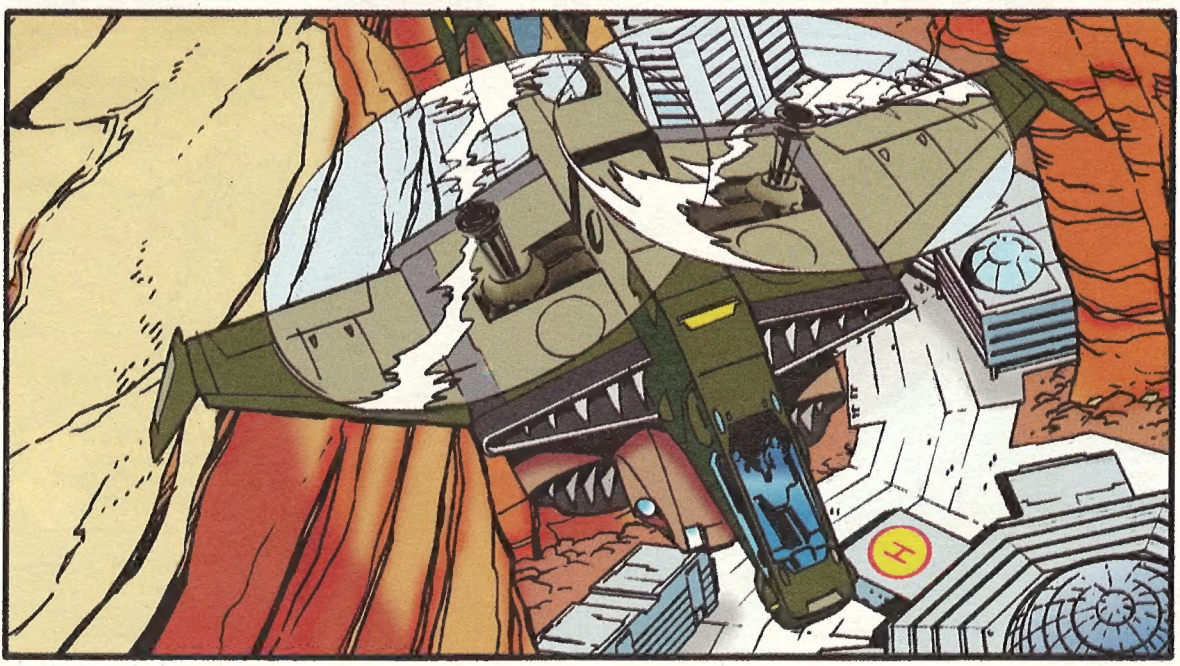
DAMMIT, THIS IS OUTRAGEOUS! GEIST IS TOO VALUABLE, AND I'M NOT GOING TO GIVE UP--
IT'S ALL RIGHT.

...WHA?... G-GEIST?
I DON'T NEED THE ARMOR.
O-OKAY, GEIST. ARE YOU SURE?...

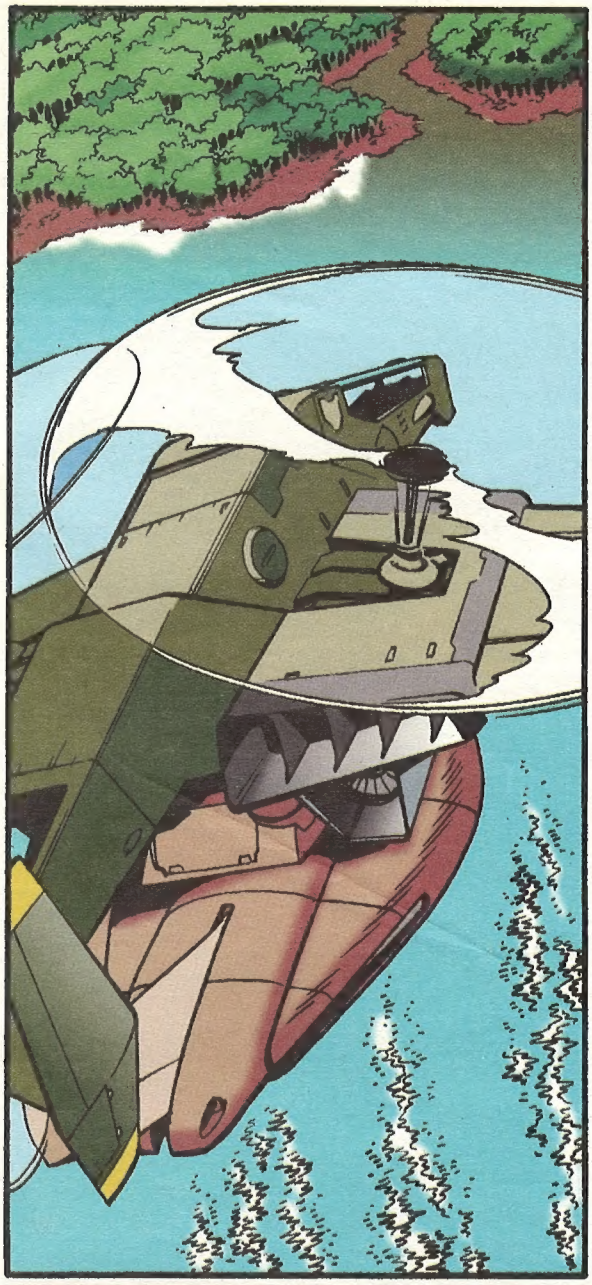
I'VE BEEN ORDERED TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS MISSION. NO ONE MENTIONED A DRESS CODE.
...

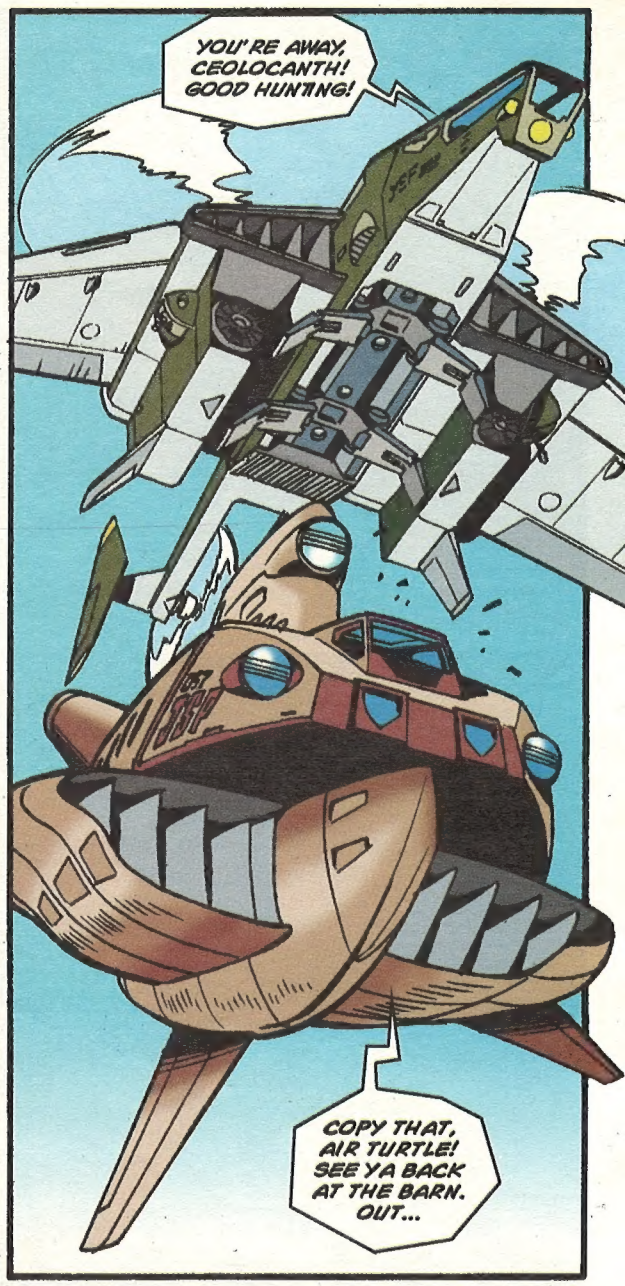

I HOPE THAT GAVE YOU A CLUE, COLONEL.
ARE YOU FINISHED, WONG? MY MEN ARE WAITING FOR ME...
YOU'D BETTER BE PREPARED TO USE GEIST IN COMBAT, STANTON. NOBODY ELSE IN YOUR PLATOON WILL HAVE A CHANCE AGAINST THOSE CYBORG POWERED SUITS.
AND I WANT TO BRING BACK SOMETHING THAT WILL PLACATE THE COUNCIL.
TOO BAD, WONG. I DON'T GIVE A RAT'S ASS ABOUT YOUR POLITICAL POWER GAMES. NONE OF THAT STUFF IS WORTH A DAMN OUT ON THE FRONT LINES.
FOR THE LAST TIME: GEIST IS HERE FOR BACKUP, NOTHING MORE. THE ONLY WAY HE'LL SEE ANY ACTION ON THIS MISSION IS IF THE REST OF US HAVE TURNED INTO CORPSES. THAT'S A PROMISE.
COME ALONG, LIEUTENANT.
HUH. "A PROMISE." SOUNDED MORE LIKE A PROPHECY.
LIFTOFF IN SIX MINUTES! ALL PERSONNEL CLEAR PAD 5! ALL PERSONNEL CLEAR PAD 5!

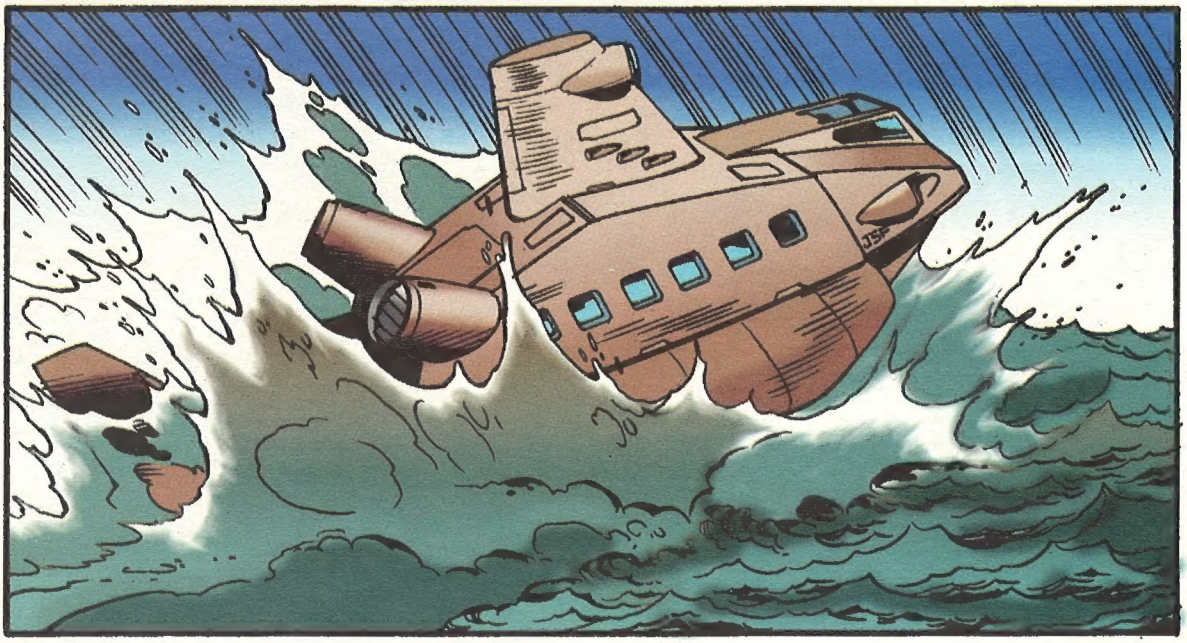
JSF32B
057
JSF



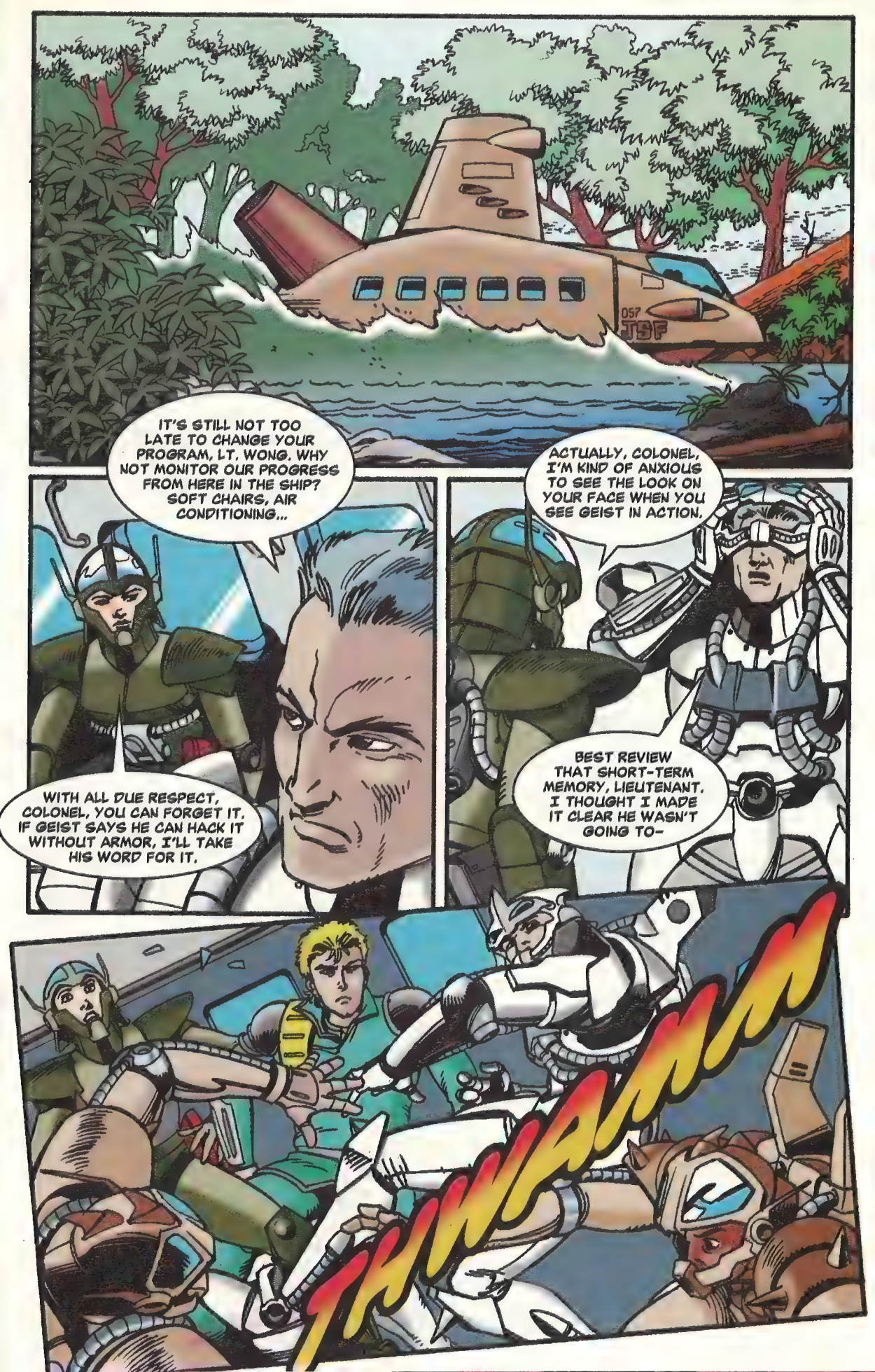
YO, LIEUTENANT! WHAT THE HELL'S SO SPECIAL ABOUT THIS GUY, ANYWAY? DON'T LOOK LIKE MUCH TO ME...
GEIST IS PART OF A CLASSIFIED PROGRAM, SOLDIER. CAN'T TELL YOU ANY MORE THAN THAT. JUST WATCH AND LEARN.
JSF
YEAH? WHAT'S THAT "M.D." ON HIS DOG TAG STAND FOR?
"MOST DANGEROUS."
WOOOOO! TOO BAD YOU DIDN'T GET A SUIT ON, PAL! PRETTY SOON YOU GONNA BE "MOST DEAD!"
MORONS. THEY'RE ALL GOING TO DIE.
JSF
APPROACHING DROPSITE! ALL PERSONNEL BRACE FOR RELEASE!




YOU'RE AWAY, COELOCANTH! GOOD HUNTING!
COPY THAT, AIR TURTLE! SEE YA BACK AT THE BARN. OUT...



THAT'S THE TRIBUTARY? DOESN'T LOOK DEEP ENOUGH FOR US TO STAY SUBMERGED...
IT'S ALL RIGHT, COLONEL...
WE DIDN'T PICK UP ANY SCANNING SOURCES ON THE COASTLINE, AND WE'RE IN STEALTH MODE. LONG AS NOBODY ACQUIRES US VISUALLY, IT'S LIKE WE'RE NOT EVEN HERE.
GOOD. I'M HEADING AFT TO ORGANIZE THE PLATOON. WE'LL WAIT FOR YOUR SIGNAL TO DISEMBARK.
NO PROB. UNTIL THE BRUSH GETS TOO DENSE FOR PASSAGE YOU'RE SAFE IN MAMA'S LOVING ARMS.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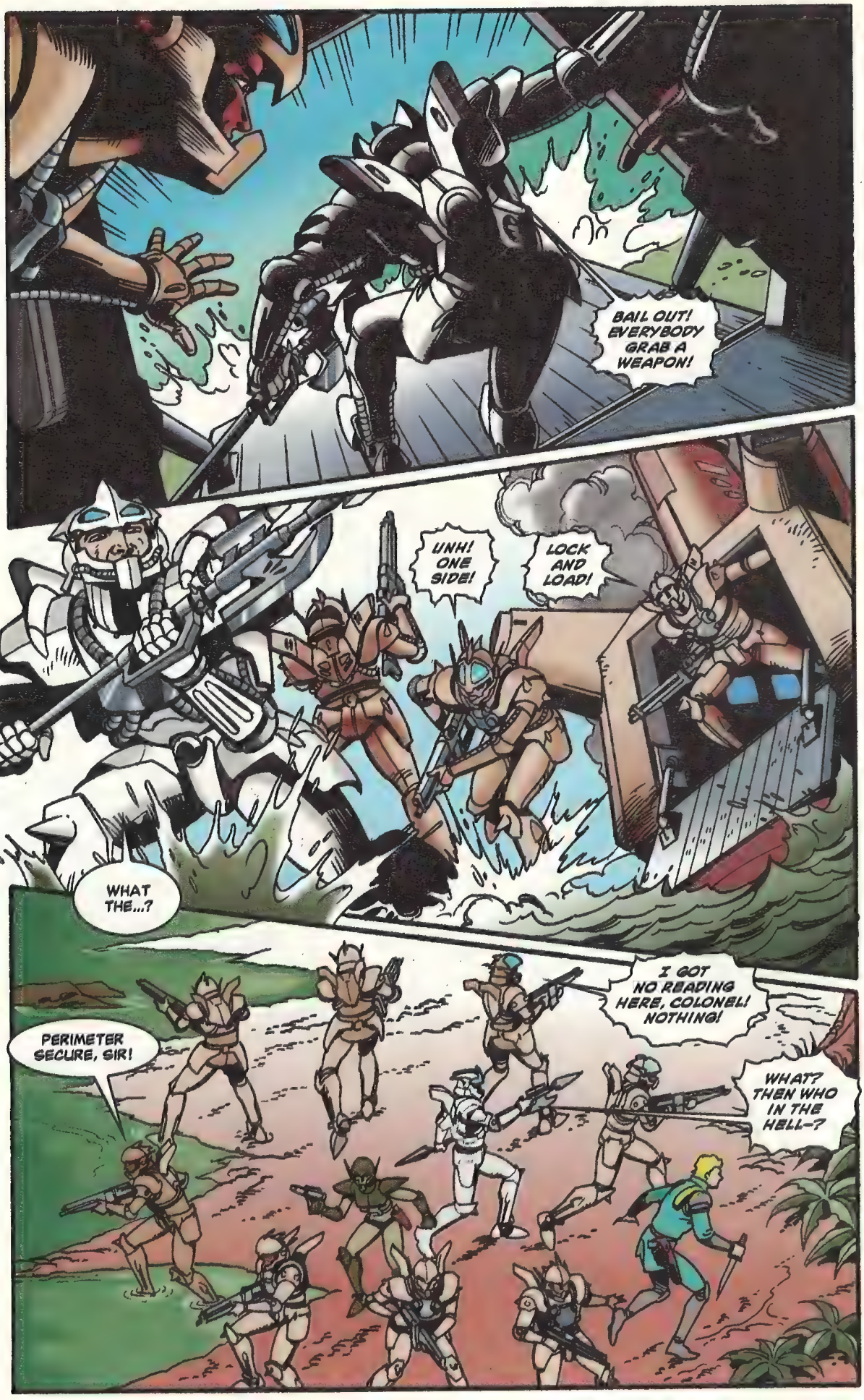
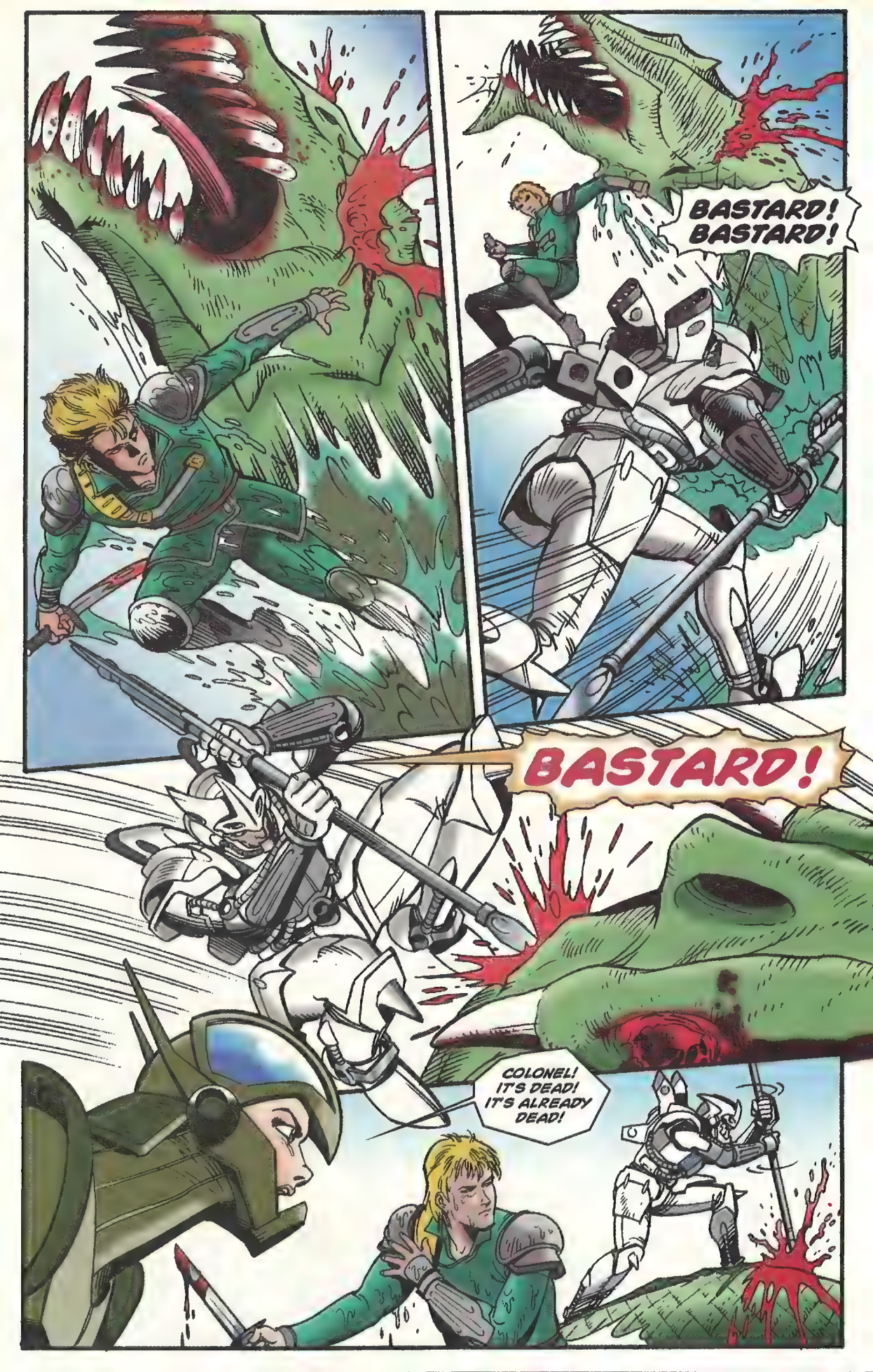
JSF
IT'S STILL NOT TOO LATE TO CHANGE YOUR PROGRAM, LT. WONG. WHY NOT MONITOR OUR PROGRESS FROM HERE IN THE SHIP? SOFT CHAIRS, AIR CONDITIONING...
WITH ALL DUE RESPECT, COLONEL, YOU CAN FORGET IT. IF GEIST SAYS HE CAN HACK IT WITHOUT ARMOR, I'LL TAKE HIS WORD FOR IT.
ACTUALLY, COLONEL, I'M KIND OF ANXIOUS TO SEE THE LOOK ON YOUR FACE WHEN YOU SEE GEIST IN ACTION.
BEST REVIEW THAT SHORT-TERM MEMORY, LIEUTENANT. I THOUGHT I MADE IT CLEAR HE WASN'T GOING TO-
THWAMM

WHOAH! WHAT THE HELL--

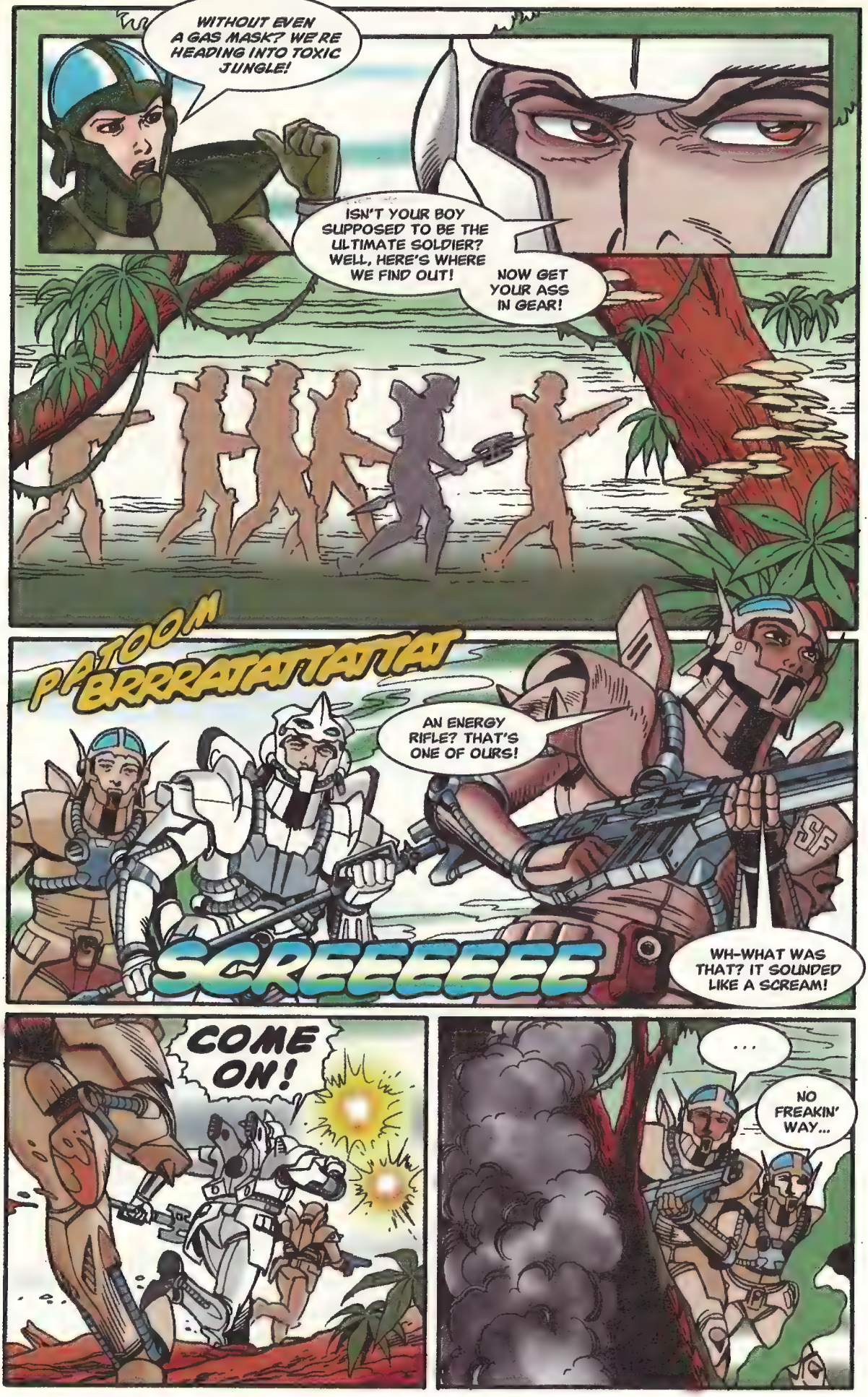

BAIL OUT! EVERYBODY GRAB A WEAPON!
UNH! ONE SIDE!
LOCK AND LOAD!
WHAT THE...?
I GOT NO READING HERE, COLONEL! NOTHING!
PERIMETER SECURE, SIR!
WHAT? THEN WHO IN THE HELL-?

KILL IT!
KILL IT!
LOOK OUT!
JSF
GEIST!

GOD DAMN CRAZY SON OF A–
WELL, SO MUCH FOR MR. "MOST DANGEROUS."
WHAT A WAY TO GO.
TOUGH BREAK, WONG...
..LOOKS LIKE YOUR MISSION ENDS RIGHT HERE.


BASTARD! BASTARD!
BASTARD!
COLONEL! IT'S DEAD! IT'S ALREADY DEAD!

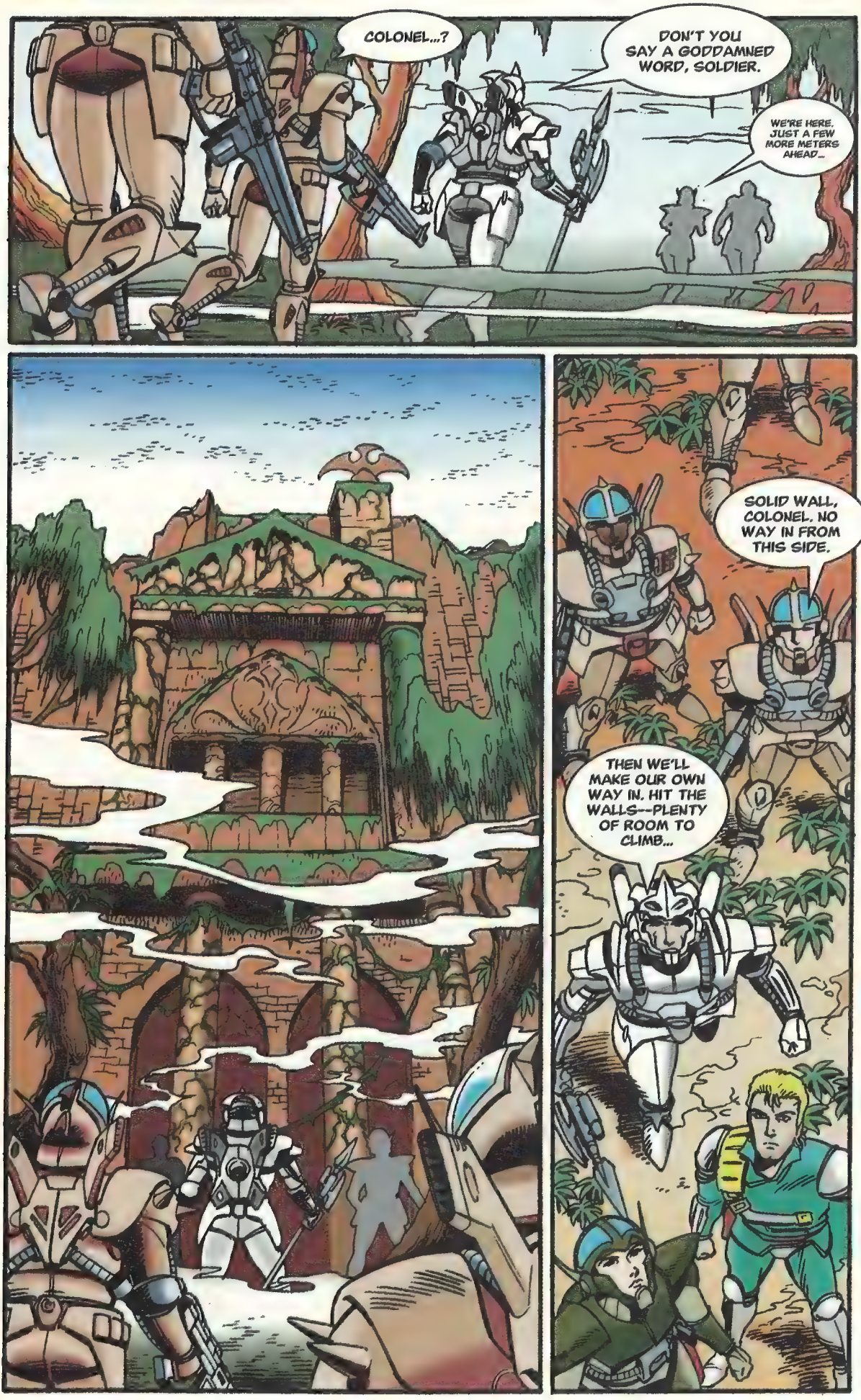
YEAH.
IT IS NOW.
WELL, WELL...
UH, COLONEL...
WHAT IS IT? WHAT?
IT'S, UH...THIS CREATURE, SIR. I'M READING UNUSUALLY HIGH LEVELS OF RADIATION FROM IT, SIR...
YOU MEAN IT'S TOXIC?
IT-IT'S PROBABLY SOMETHING IN THE LOCAL FOOD SUPPLY, SIR. DIDN'T THE SATELLITE SHOW RADIATION IN THE SECTOR WHERE THAT TEMPLE'S SUPPOSED TO BE?
YEAH...
YEAH, IT DID. THAT MEANS WE'RE CLOSE. REAL CLOSE...
GET READY TO MOVE OUT!
NUCLEAR WILDLIFE, HUH? MAYBE YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE JUMPED ON IT, COLONEL. IF YOU WERE TRYING TO PROVE SOMETHING...
WONG, YOU CAN SHUT THE HELL UP RIGHT NOW...
ALL RIGHT, LET'S ROLL!
GEIST! YOU'RE ON POINT! GET MOVING, THAT WAY!

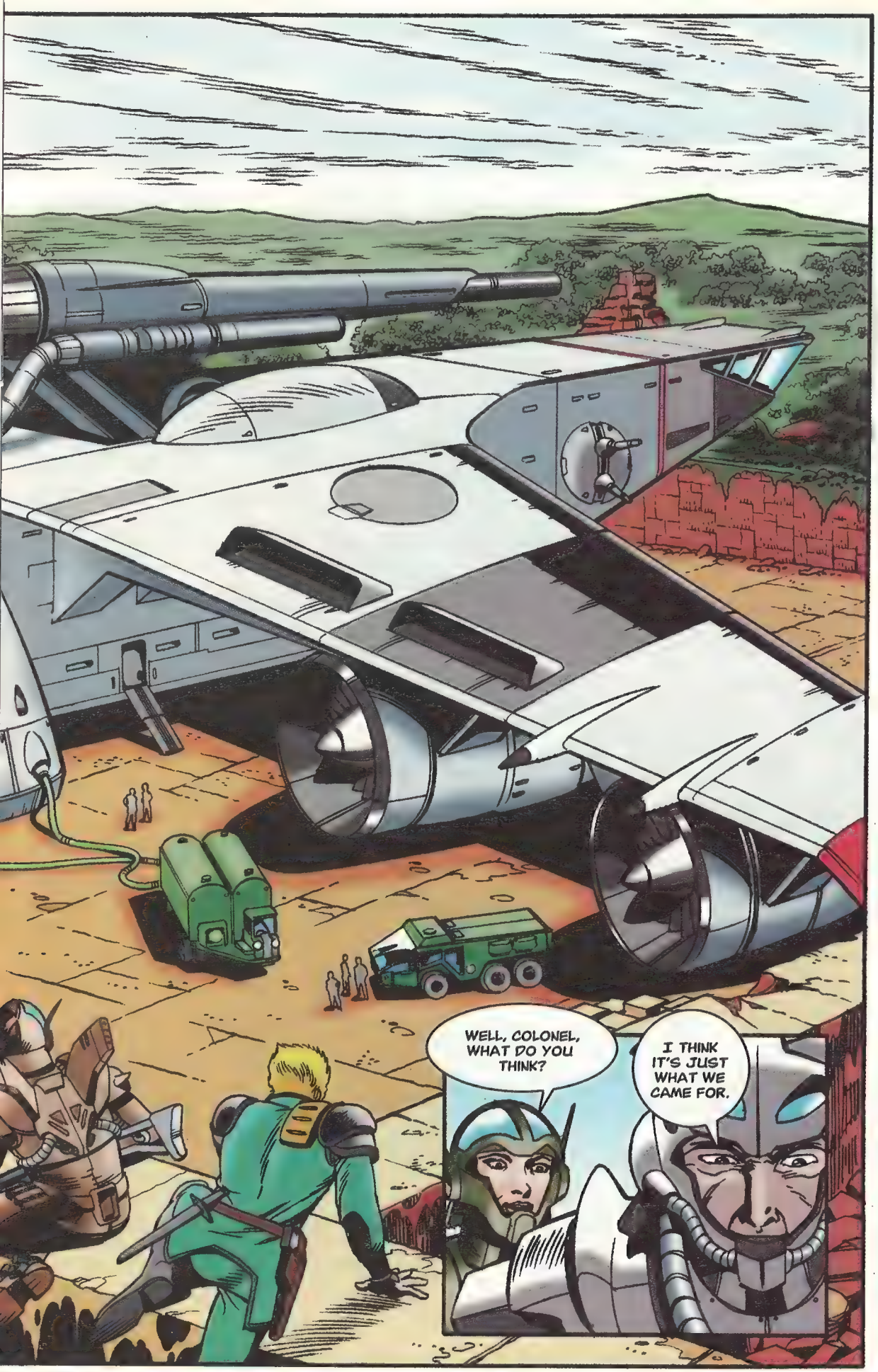

WITHOUT EVEN A GAS MASK? WE'RE HEADING INTO TOXIC JUNGLE!
ISN'T YOUR BOY SUPPOSED TO BE THE ULTIMATE SOLDIER? WELL, HERE'S WHERE WE FIND OUT!
NOW GET YOUR ASS IN GEAR!
PA TOOM
BRRRATATTATTAT
AN ENERGY RIFLE? THAT'S ONE OF OURS!
SCREEEEEEE
WH-WHAT WAS THAT? IT SOUNDED LIKE A SCREAM!
COME ON!
...
NO FREAKIN' WAY...

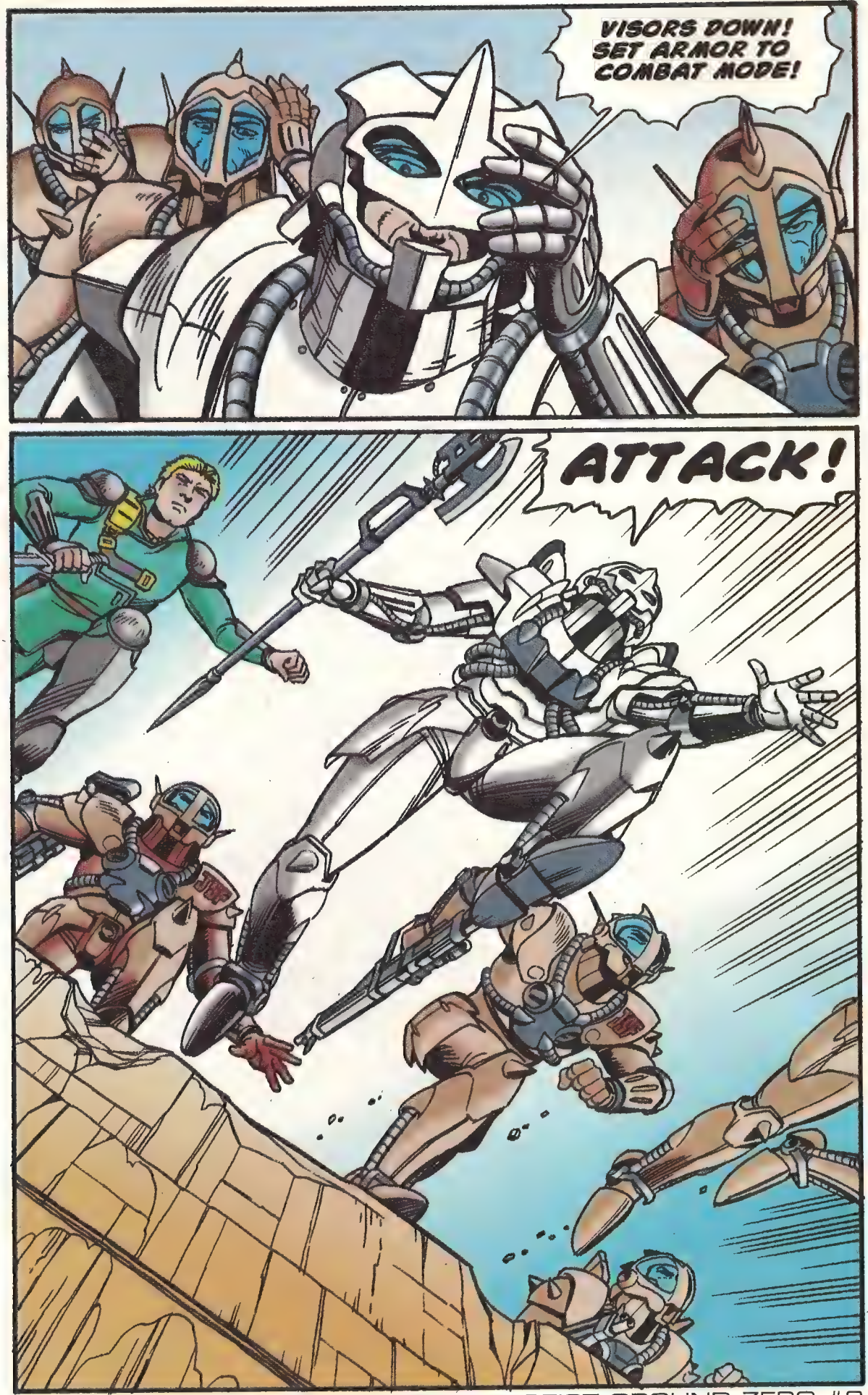
LT. WONG.
YOUR PORTABLE SHOULD BE ABLE TO PATCH IN.
GOT IT RIGHT HERE.
COLONEL, WHAT IS THAT THING?
THAT'S ONE OF THEM CYBORG SUITS SHE TALKED ABOUT!
THAT DUDE TOOK IT DOWN! TOOK IT DOWN BY HIMSELF!
QUIET!

GOOD! I'M GETTING A REAL NICE DOWNLOAD. WHOAH! HOLD HIM!
GUAHH!
OOOH! VERY INTERESTING! I'VE GOT A FIX ON THE MAIN NEXRUM BASE--AND THREE MORE WE DIDN'T EVEN KNOW ABOUT! THIS GUY'S JUST FULL OF SURPRISES!...
GUUHHHHHH! GUHHAAAGGGHHH!
...EXCELLENT! SUIT SCHEMATICS, TYPES, ORDNANCE, ALL SORTS OF GOODIES! THE COMMITEE IS GOING TO LOVE THIS!
GODDAMIT, WONG, TURN THAT THING OFF! YOU'RE NOT GOING TO TORTURE THAT MAN WHILE UNDER MY COMMAND!
BACK OFF, STANTON! THIS IS NO "MAN"! THIS ISN'T EVEN HUMAN!
GK
ZZZZZZZT
AW, SHOOT. I THINK I BROKE HIM.

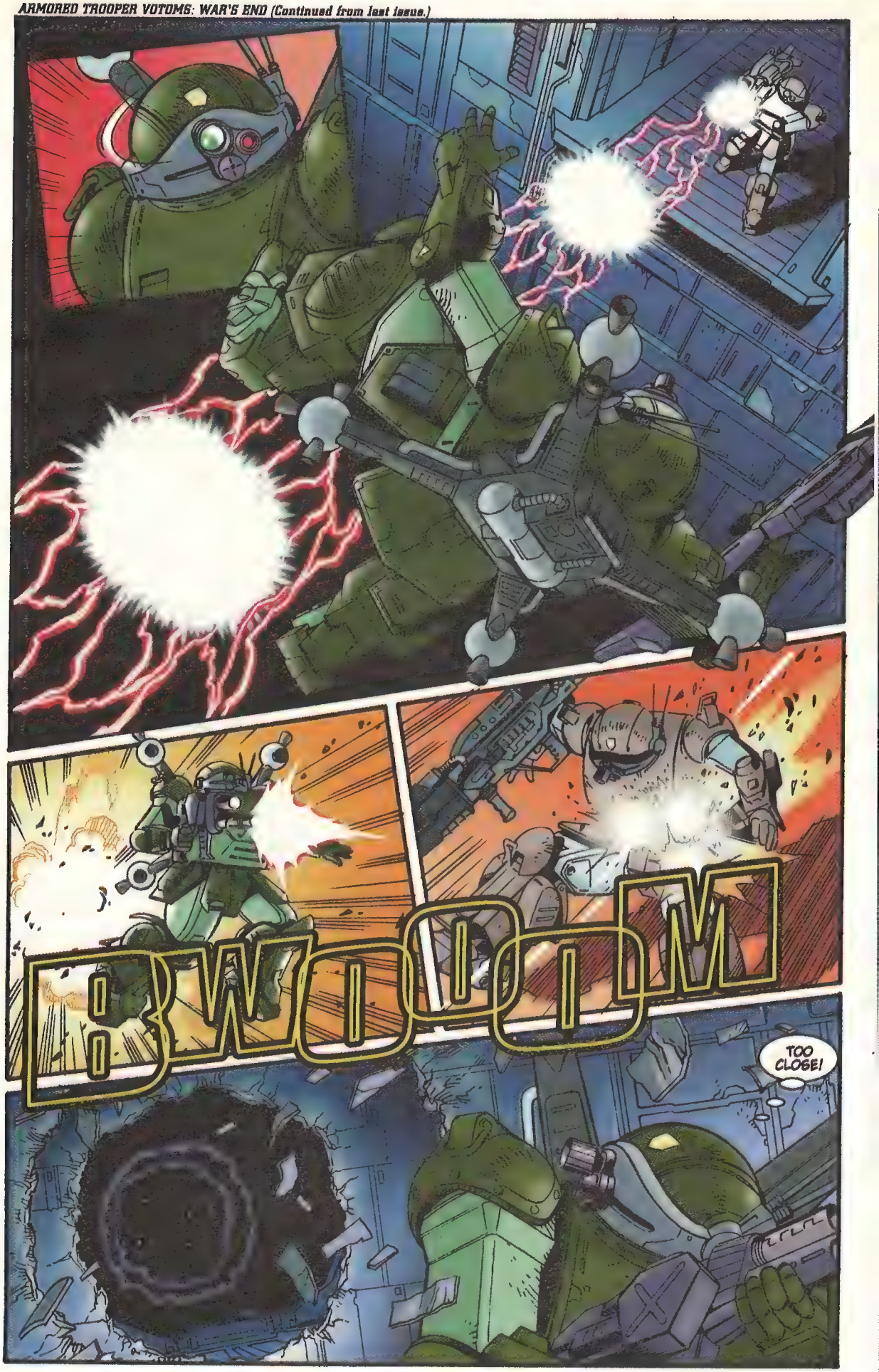
YOU SICK, TWISTED BITCH! HOW DO YOU LOOK AT YOURSELF IN THE MIRROR?
NO STOMACH FOR BLOOD, HUH? I EXPECTED MORE FROM A SOLDIER LIKE YOU...
DON'T TELL ME HOW TO BE A SOLDIER! IF YOU FIGHT WITH HONOR YOU CAN LIVE WITH YOURSELF AFTERWARDS!
COLONEL, PLEASE. YOU'RE YELLING AGAIN. WHAT ARE YOU BABBLING ABOUT NOW?
DAMMIT, LIEUTENANT, IT'S THAT...THAT THING YOU BROUGHT OUT HERE! LOOK AT HIM!
POKE
POKE
HE DOESN'T HAVE THE SLIGHTEST RESPECT FOR LIFE! WARS ARE ABOUT HUMAN BEINGS FIGHTING FOR A CAUSE. YOU WANT TO PUT MONSTERS ON THE LINES WHO DON'T GIVE A DAMN WHO OR WHY THEY KILL...
>SIGH< LOOK AT THAT THING ON THE GROUND, COLONEL. LOOK WHAT OUR ENEMY DID TO IT. WHERE IS THE HONOR IN THAT?
...
LOOK, COLONEL. YOU TOLD ME YOURSELF THAT WE'RE NOT YET OFFICIALLY AT WAR WITH NEXRUM. THE DATA I'VE JUST EXTRACTED GIVE US A CHANCE TO END THEIR REBELLION BEFORE IT TURNS INTO A WAR. THE END JUSTIFIES THE MEANS.
NOW IF YOU THINK YOU CAN HANDLE THE STRESS, I'D LIKE TO MOVE OUT.


COLONEL...?
DON'T YOU SAY A GODDAMNED WORD, SOLDIER.
WE'RE HERE. JUST A FEW MORE METERS AHEAD...
SOLID WALL, COLONEL. NO WAY IN FROM THIS SIDE.
THEN WE'LL MAKE OUR OWN WAY IN. HIT THE WALLS--PLENTY OF ROOM TO CLIMB...


WELL, COLONEL, WHAT DO YOU THINK?
I THINK IT'S JUST WHAT WE CAME FOR.

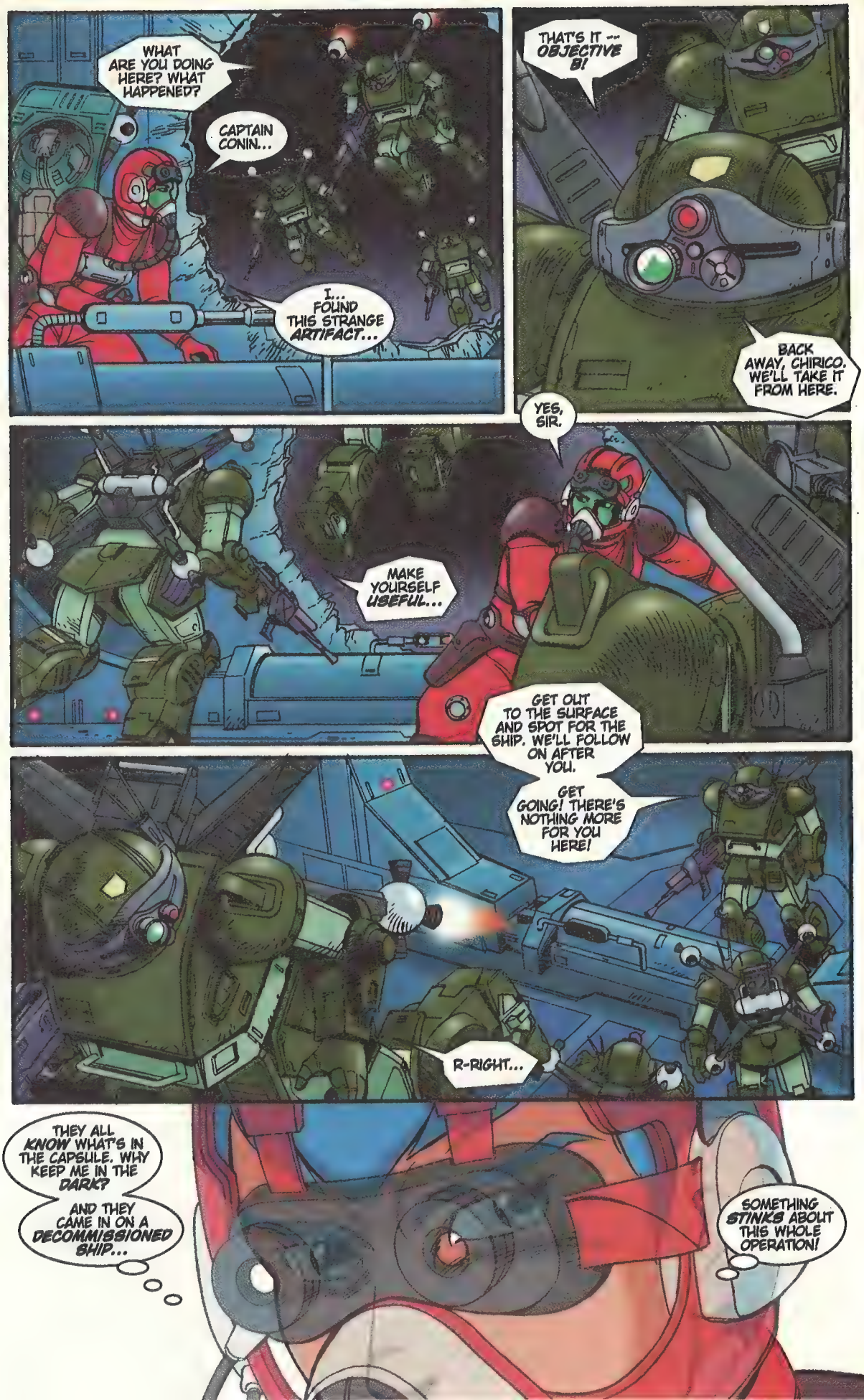


TO BE CONTINUED: M.D.GEIST GROUND ZERO #3


BWOOM
TOO CLOSE!

WAIT A MINUTE...
THERE'S ACTIVE MACHINERY IN HERE...
HUMMING... PULSATING...
ALMOST LIKE IT'S...
IS THIS WHAT WE CAME FOR?
...ALIVE?
TEK
TEK

!
UNH!
TEH
WHAT...
WHAT THE HELL IS THIS?!
CHIRICO!


WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? WHAT HAPPENED?
CAPTAIN CONIN...
I... FOUND THIS STRANGE ARTIFACT...
THAT'S IT -- OBJECTIVE B!
BACK AWAY, CHIRICO. WE'LL TAKE IT FROM HERE.
YES, SIR.
MAKE YOURSELF USEFUL...
GET OUT TO THE SURFACE AND SPOT FOR THE SHIP. WE'LL FOLLOW ON AFTER YOU.
GET GOING! THERE'S NOTHING MORE FOR YOU HERE!
R-RIGHT...
THEY ALL KNOW WHAT'S IN THE CAPSULE. WHY KEEP ME IN THE DARK?
AND THEY CAME IN ON A DECOMMISSIONED SHIP...
SOMETHING STINKS ABOUT THIS WHOLE OPERATION!

AND AS SOON AS WE GET BACK, I'M GOING TO FIND OUT...
...WHAT?
TELTAIN, DO YOU COPY? THIS IS CONIN.
OBJECTIVES A AND B HAVE BEEN OBTAINED.
EXCELLENT. PREPARE TO PULL OUT.
CONIN, WE'RE SEEING A FLASH ON THE SURFACE OF LIDO...
NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT, GENERAL KILLY...

"...JUST A PROBLEM YOU ASKED US TO SOLVE."
UNIDENTIFIED A.T., DO YOU COPY?
THIS IS THE WARSHIP BAUNTALINT — PREPARE TO BE TAKEN ABOARD.
YAAAAAAAA
SORRY ABOUT THE RUDE AWAKENING...
...BUT I'D LIKE YOU TO GIVE ME SOME ANSWERS.

W-WHERE AM I?
I'M ASKING THE QUESTIONS. LET'S START WITH YOUR NAME AND BIRTHDATE.
CHIRICO.
CHIRICO CUVIE.
I WAS BORN... YEAR 7196, IN THE SEVENTH MONTH.
ONLY 18 YEARS OLD. WHAT UNIT ARE YOU WITH?
2045TH A.T. CORPS, 24TH MELKIAN FRONT.
WHAT WAS YOUR MISSION IN THIS SECTOR?
I... WAS NEVER TOLD.
WHOSE COMMAND WERE YOU UNDER?
LIEUTENANT CONIN... CAPTAIN ORIYA. I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ELSE.
WHO BLEW UP ASTEROID LIDO?
I DON'T KNOW!
WHERE DID THEY TAKE THE PROTOTYPE?
"PROTOTYPE?" WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
THERE WAS A CONTAINER THERE. LIKE A COFFIN.
DID YOU SEE WHAT WAS INSIDE IT?
NO... NO, I DIDN'T!
YOU'RE LYING! WHERE DID THEY TAKE IT?
MY COMRADES BETRAYED ME! I DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO --
AAAGH

WELL? HOW IS HE?
UNCONSCIOUS...
...BUT UNDAMAGED, CAPTAIN ROCHINA.
I NEVER THOUGHT IT'D BE OUR OWN PEOPLE. WHAT DO YOU THINK, JEAN-PAUL?
HE'S OUR ONLY LEAD, GENERAL BATTENTAIN. WE HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO WRING IT OUT OF HIM.
AS IF WE DIDN'T HAVE ENOUGH PROBLEMS...
I'LL DO WHAT I CAN TO SPEED UP THE SIGNING OF THE TREATY...
...BUT WE CAN'T LET WORD OF THIS LEAK OUT TO THE BALARANT FORCES.
I'LL RETURN TO MELKIA AT ONCE.
THERE I CAN TAKE MY TIME WITH HIM.
LATER...
WELCOME HOME, CHIRICO.
THAT'S MELKIA? LOOKS LIKE IT'S BEEN THROUGH HELL.
IT HAS.
75% OF THE POPULATION WAS WIPED OUT BY THE TIME THE CEASE-FIRE WAS DECLARED...
"...SO I DOUBT ONE MORE CASUALTY WILL BE NOTICED."

NO WAY OUT

HAVING REACHED THEIR OBJECTIVE,GEIST AND THE FIGHTING MEN OF THE JERRA SPECIAL FORCES ATTACK AN ENEMY BASE, INTENT ON CAPTURING A WARPLANE CAPABLE OF DESTROYING THE PLANET JERRA ITSELF. BUT THE TABLES QUICKLY TURN, AND THEY FIND THEMSELVES IN THE FIGHT OF THEIR LIVES—WITH THE CLOCK TICKING DOWN TO ULTIMATE DESTRUCTION! TRAPPED WITHIN THE WARPLANE ITSELF, THEY ARE ASSAULTED ON ALL SIDES... BUT NO ONE HAS RECKONED WITH THE FULL POTENTIAL OF THE MOST DANGEROUS SOLDIER! THIS ALL-NEW ADVENTURE—WRITTEN BY THE CREATOR OF THE ORIGINAL ANIMATED SERIES *M.D. GEIST*—BRINGS *GROUND ZERO* TO ITS EXPLOSIVE CONCLUSION! ART BY TIM ELDRED AND STUDIO GO!

M.D. GEIST: GROUND ZERO #3 COMING IN MAY FROM CPM COMICS!

AND IN THE SAME ISSUE... THE THIRD CHAPTER OF ARMORED TROOPER VOTOMS:

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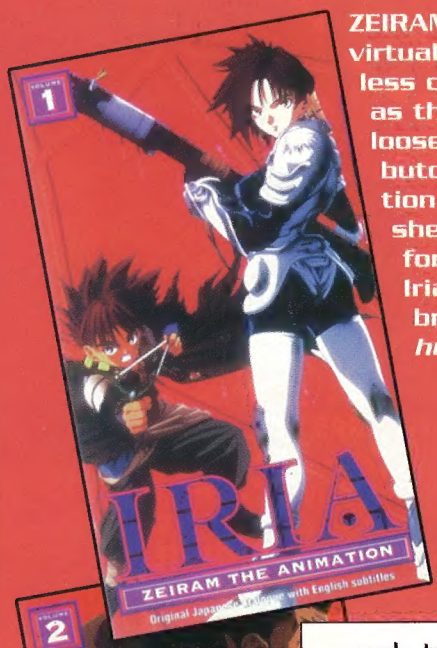

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